



# INSURRECTION

ISSUE ONE / 50 PENCE



**/**NSURRECTION", A NEW ANARCHIST PAPER. IT WILL CONTAIN THEORETICAL ARTICLES, ARTICLES ON CURRENT EVENTS, A CHRONICLE OF STRUGGLE, AND WILL DENOUNCE REPRESSION IN ALL ITS FORMS. NOTHING UNUSUAL SO FAR. NEW ANARCHIST PAPERS APPEAR FREQUENTLY, FULL OF HOPES, BUT DIE AFTER A FEW ISSUES QUITE DIVORCED FROM REALITY.

"INSURRECTION" IS BORN WITH NO GREAT HOPES. WE ARE NOT HOPING

THE PAPER WILL SELL A GIVEN NUMBER OF COPIES EACH MONTH JUST SO THAT IT CAN KEEP COMING OUT. WE DON'T WANT COMRADES TO DUTIFULLY SEND US FIFTY PENCE A MONTH TO PUT THEIR CONSCIENCE AT REST, DELUDING THEMSELVES THAT THEY ARE THUS DOING SOMETHING 'FOR THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION'.

IF AFTER A FEW ISSUES WE REALISE THIS IS HOW PEOPLE REACT TO "INSURRECTION" WE SHALL STOP PRODUCING IT. THERE ARE ALREADY TOO MANY ANARCHIST PAPERS ENDLESSLY REPEATING THEMSELVES IN DEFENCE OF A BANNER OR SYMBOL AND OFFERING NO REAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRUGGLE.

"INSURRECTION" INTENDS TO BE AN INSTRUMENT, NOT JUST ANOTHER PIECE IN A NEVER COMPLETED JIGSAW PUZZLE. BUT WE CANNOT DO THIS ALONE, A HANDFUL OF COMRADES. TO BE A REAL INSTRUMENT AN ANARCHIST PAPER MUST PROVIDE NOT ONLY 'INFORMATION' BUT ALSO 'INDICATIONS'. THE DAILY PRESS IS FULL OF INFORMATION OF A CERTAIN KIND, BUT ONLY ONE INDICATION—KEEP QUIET AND DO NOTHING—THUS GIVING THE STATE THE CONSENSUS IT REQUIRES.

AN ANARCHIST PAPER SHOULD GIVE BOTH THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL INDICATIONS OF STRUGGLE. THERE IS NO ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO. THEY OFTEN MERGE, THEORY BECOMING THE INDISPENSABLE PREMISS OF ACTION, ACTION BECOMING THEORETICAL ANALYSIS.

AN EXAMPLE—A WILDCAT STRIKE, A MASS SACKING, A FACTORY OCCUPATION, A RIOT, A STRUGGLE IN ONE OF THE GHETTOS OR IN A SCHOOL. IN SUCH SITUATIONS COMRADES OFTEN DON'T KNOW HOW TO INTERVENE WITH IMMEDIATE AND EFFECTIVE PROPAGANDA. THEY COULD CONTACT THE PAPER'S EDITORIAL GROUP AND TOGETHER PUBLISH AN ARTICLE. BY DISTRIBUTING COPIES ON THE SPOT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO BEGIN OR DEEPEN THE CONTACT WITH THE STRUGGLE ITSELF.

IF THIS METHOD IS USED IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS THE



PAPER WILL BECOME AN INSTRUMENT, NOT JUST A LITERARY EXERCISE FOR A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE. THE NATURE OF THIS WORK WILL NOT EMERGE CLEARLY FROM THE FIRST ISSUE, BUT COMRADES SHOULD BEAR IT IN MIND BOTH IN THEIR COLLABORATION WITH THE PAPER AND IN THE USE OF THE COPIES THEY REQUEST

# ISSUE ONE

April 1984

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# THE LOGIC OF

# INSURRECTION

When we hear the word insurrection we think of some precise moment of upheaval in the past, or imagine a similar clash in the future. Spontaneous insurrection occurs when people are pushed beyond their limits of endurance at their points of exploitation. Certain events take place: street clashes, attacks against the police, destruction of the symbols of capitalism (banks, jewellers, supermarkets, etc). Such moments of popular violence catch anarchists unprepared, amazed that yesterday's apathy is transformed into today's rage.

Look at Brixton a couple of years ago: anarchists were not, could not have been, protagonists in the riot. Events took them by surprise. People rose up for reasons apparently simple, but which were hatching beneath the surface for a long time. Anarchists' participation was simply that of adapting to the situation, the *guests* of an insurrection but not acting with an insurrectional logic. To throw a brick is not the best way for a conscious revolutionary to participate in an insurrection.

When we talk of applying a logic of insurrection we mean going about things the other way round. We do not limit ourselves to identifying areas of social tension and joining in when it explodes, we try to stimulate rebellion and even more, propose and participate in the formation of an organisation of revolt.

Let's try to be as clear as possible. The kind of organisation we mean should be of an associative, social or mass character—a committee, support group, league against repression, association for housing rights, anti-nuclear groups, abstentionist league against the elections, etc—not a specific anarchist group. Why should people have to belong to an anarchist group to take part in a social struggle?

People's participation in this kind of structure can be limitless, depending on the work the anarchists manage to do within it. Beginning with a handful of comrades and people most motivated in a particular struggle, whether it be a wildcat strike, mass sackings, a proposed NATO base, squatting, etc, it would entail initially spreading information about the situation set out as clearly clearly and directly as possible. Leaflets, journals, posters, debates, conferences, public meetings and so on would be used and the embryo of one of the groups mentioned above formed. When there is some response to this part of the work it is time to establish a meeting place and contact number. The organisation's actions will become more effective as the struggle progresses, numbers increase and repression develops against it.

The outcome will not be certain. The active presence of anarchists does not mean control but rather stimulation. They have the same rights as the others and no particular weight in decision making. Their suggestions will be considered valid if they are both in tune with the general level of feeling and at the same time try to push it forward.

Timid or hesitant proposals would be rejected as obstacles to advancing the struggle and as betraying their needs and rebellion.

A proposal that is too far advanced, that goes beyond the level of the moment would be considered impossible, dangerous and counterproductive. People would withdraw, afraid of being mixed up in who knows what.

Anarchists operating within this structure must therefore be in touch with reality and propose actions that are both possible and comprehensible. It is possible that a spreading mass rebellion could evolve from this initial work of stimulation. This is what we mean by the methods and logic of insurrection. It is quite different to the logic of trade unionism and syndicalism (including anarcho-syndicalism), structures which all begin from a logic of defence as opposed to one of attack. They tend towards quantitative growth (increasing membership) and defending past gains, and, in the case of the trade unions, protecting the interests of one category. What we are proposing on the contrary are basic associative structures organised to deal with one objective of struggle and stimulate people's feelings of rebellion, to culminate in as conscious an insurrection as possible.

Using this method there is no way the anarchists within the structure can transform themselves into a leadership or power group. In fact, as we have said, they are obliged to follow the conditions of the struggle. They are not working for a quantitative growth in their own anarchist group. They cannot propose simply defensive actions but are constrained to go towards increasingly advanced ones. On the one hand these actions can lead to insurrection and levels that cannot be predicted. On the other they can fail to be effective. In either case the original associative structure inevitably becomes redundant, and the anarchists will go back to what they were doing before.

Alfredo M. Bonanno



## THE DEVIL'S PLANS

English capitalism is among the most advanced in the world both at a technological level and at that of the production of social peace.

The conservatives' coming to power fitted into this situation perfectly. In a sense what the progressivism of the labour party 'party of the people' was able to give English capitalism through its socialist rhetoric—welfare, incomes policy (i.e. wage cuts) and the dismembering of the hardest and most advanced struggles—had all been done. They could go no further on the road of permissiveness and State supporter of demand.

An about turn has now taken place. Privatisation is allowing capital to regain whole sectors of productivity that had been taken from it by State initiatives (nationalisation). In this way the government's process of creating *social peace* does not come about directly (through social security benefits for example), but indirectly (through reduction of inflation, increased possibility of work, selected demand, accentuation of social differen-

tiation, enclosure of the poverty ghettos, repression of these ghettos, etc.

Economic reality had threatened to become divided into two unequal parts: a small productive minority and a huge unproductive majority who however were still active consumers.

What they now want is a stratification into three fairly equal levels: a high-earning productive one, a low earning productive one with a qualified, contained demand; and one with no earnings and fierce repression against it (see increases in government spending on police, prisons, etc).

Social filters will be greatly restricted, something that is still easy to bring about in the largely 'closed' structure which still persists in this country today.

Incentive comes from capital returning to find new areas of investment in the homeland instead of going looking for them abroad, for example in America where the dollar rate is so attractive...In this way the dollar/pound relationship should move in favour of the pound, allowing Mrs Thatcher a better political

management of private investment and her schemes for privatisation.

But the second and third categories mentioned above—Will they passively accept being put in their place? Will they accept having to reduce their demand and have it selected according to the will of those commanding them? And those who have been pushed into the ghettos, will they agree to remain there? Will they accept living with soldiers controlling every street corner?

All this remains to be seen.

With Mr Kinnock, Labour have put into operation a kind of 'conversion to centre', leaving Mr Foot with his impracticable trade unionist fantasies out in the cold.

But isn't there still the road of uncontrollable wildcat strikes? And that of sabotage? That of self-managed organisation of the struggle? The future is wide open to discussion. The devil's plans go oft astray.

Pantagruel



# STOP THE CITY?

## POLITICS IN WOLVES' CLOTHING

Comrades of *Greenpeace* and various anarchist and pacifist groups and individuals organised a demonstration which took place on September 29 under the slogan *Stop the City*. The object was to demonstrate the link between the city and the battlefields, between big business and Cruise. By paralysing the working of this seemingly aseptic centre of accounting and financial transactions, office workers and bank clerks were to become aware of the homicidal implications of their daily routines. The denunciation of a situation of fact: that the whole nuclear programme has solid roots in the capitalist strongholds of the world and that this is the real force behind all the State facades of 'defence' and other such double speak. The demonstration took various forms. Some comrades organised sit-ins, others road blocks, others again went for direct attacks on vehicles and buildings. Leaflets were distributed and banks were suddenly filled with demonstrators blocking tills. The demonstration was the result of months of preparation. Comrades came from all over the country. Here are some impressions of the event:

**2**03 people arrested without a struggle or anyone fighting back...as if people wanted to be arrested so they could tell their kids...we didn't work imaginatively together but bunched up like a crowd of silly sheep...it should be clear by now (after 900 got done at Upper Heyford) that it's futile to court arrest and hope for good publicity in the fascist press...several groups let off smoke canisters in the Tube tunnels during the morning, the northern and circle lines were closed for some time...several trains were stopped by people pulling the emergency cords...some prepared nails welded together so that a pointed end always sticks up. They scattered these on the roads at key points...a fur shop was successfully smashed up by the animal activists during the demo...trading was badly hit at London International Futures exchange when *Stop the City* people used it as a main gathering point. No despatch riders were able to reach it due to the crowd and vital bank drafts and telexes went astray...one red-necked bastard police inspector got a good kicking after he pushed a punk woman in the face...another group got right inside Rothschilds pretending to be couriers before being set upon by a gang of nasties...for me *Stop the City* was a brilliant success. What I saw was the birth of a new movement without leaders or bureaucracy. At last we have gone beyond the sterile passivity of the institutionalised Peace Movement...*Stop the City* had room for diversity...let's do it again, let's do it every six months or even quarterly!...sitting outside the Bank tube station were three fascist skinheads openly displaying their fucking swastikas tattooed on their arms, shouting abuse and racist slogans at the poxy peace protests, knowing that with a large amount of police present no one would stand up to these SHITheads and try to stop these crap...*Stop the City* was SHIT..."

As we can see, consideration of the event are as mixed as the event itself. One thing however was confirmed that day: that many comrades are ready to come out into the streets and defy the 'order' of police lines, military formations and legal threats with an energy and creativity which if released with more

preparation and direction is of a quality that far outweighs the counterpart's numerical superiority.

For this reason we feel the need to look more closely at certain analytical premises of *Stop the City*.

The first is that the argument—that of nuclear arms and City dealings—was placed in *political* terms. In other words, there was no intention of attracting a mass involvement which could have led to a generalised attack.

So far nothing unusual here. Political demonstrations are the most common kind and anarchists are often present without contradicting their revolutionary aims. What does become contradictory is the frustration that some comrades obviously felt about the 'tame' methods used to put this political message across. Yet, looking at the situation objectively—the transmission of certain information to predominantly office and white collar workers, and only in second place to other strata of workers (totally relying on media coverage for this)—it had no need for a head on collision with the police to prove its point. It could even be argued that the point could be more effectively put across using the traditional pacifist methods as the demonstration had been planned in terms of pacifist politics even though many comrades had wanted—and attempted—to use direct action and attack to convey them.

To be more explicit: the basic message of *Stop the City* (linking armaments to City financial dealings) does not go beyond the limits of the CND type organisation's political stand of publicising and attacking the nuclear race as a *thing in it self*, without inserting it into a social context and linking it to everyday exploitation. That is why we see very few manual workers and unemployed on anti-nuclear demonstrations but predominantly middle class school teachers, social workers, etc. It is not because the demo decides to use 'hard' tactics instead of 'soft' that this situation will change.

What miner, his lungs filling up with black dust that is slowly killing him (and he knows it), the lorry driver who has to face all weather conditions to take home a weekly wage, the millions in the sweatshops trying to keep body and soul together, have any interest in vague and general bleatings about PEACE? Even

a 'hard' demonstration based on that premiss seems far removed from their reality. On the face of it these people, and the millions of unemployed manual workers and young people don't care about the eventuality of a nuclear war. At least it would be quicker than the slow painful deaths and the casualty lists of a war that is being waged against them every day. Yet without their involvement anti-war demonstrations will be nothing more than a political protest albeit with a fringe available for direct action as their preferred method.

If anarchists mean to not only inform about but also attack the armaments programme, the militarisation of our territory and so on, we must prepare far wider and incisive strategies than another *Stop the City* demonstration, or even monthly ones as has been suggested!

Even the (symbolic) attack on the 'heart of the State' is a political gesture. Anarchists are well aware that the State has no heart, is just as vulnerable at the dole office, the housing estates, transport networks, etc, etc, as it is in the City. It will never be known what might have happened in Italy in the last few years had groups such as the stalinist Red

Brigades instead of 'striking the heart of the State' had worked to widen socialise their attacks at a level that could be comprehended and participated in by workers instead of taking on a military frontal attack which forced them into isolation and becoming part of the spectacle to be dished up daily by the media with the effect of crippling autonomous struggle and now ended up in the squalor of betrayal, repentance and amnesty.

This all leads to a series of questions which have never been discussed within the movement and which in my opinion are fundamentally linked to any proposals of action. The distinction between strategy and tactics (in the case of *Stop the City* tactics came under fire while the basic strategy was never questioned) needs to be gone into. The (in many cases false) problem of the distinction between pacifist and violent methods in anti-nuclear struggles is open to discussion. It's time to stop burying our heads in the sand or bristling up every time the concept of criticism and self-criticism appears, concepts which are fundamental to anarchism itself and without which we risk becoming robotic activists.

Jean Weir





# CHRONICLE

## SEPTEMBER

- 1** British Gas Corporation is to cut between 10,000 and 20,000 jobs by the end of the 80's.
- Police are investigating bombings at the London offices and home of South African millionaire Sir Philip Oppenheimer.
- 5** The day before term starts a Berkshire primary school is set alight and destroyed.
- 1984 showed a record fall of 500,000 in TUC memberships.
- 6** Scotland Yard launches 'neighbourhood watch' scheme. Meetings are being held with residents' associations, pensioners and children, inviting them all to spy on each other.
- Unemployed 16 year old Andrew Bardin from Rotherhithe 'dies' after being chased by an Australian tourist who saw him stealing a handbag. How this 'citizen's arrest' came about is not made public. What we know is that Andrew ended up choking on his own vomit.
- 75% abstention in the Lewisham Drakes Ward by-election.
- Dunstan Dunstan, 29, is committed for trial at Aylesbury Crown Court, accused of threatening to kill Prince Charles.



- 8** A letter bomb addressed to Secretary of State Norman Tebbit ignites on being opened by a clerk. In Edinburgh another was sent to George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland.
- 12 year old Craig Bennett was killed while working at a funfair ride belonging to Mr Maurice Sketchley, Abergale, N Wales who employed him from 11 am till 10 30 pm for £5. His T shirt caught on a catch and pulled him backwards into the ride as it span round.
- 12** A 30 year old coach driver is thrown through the windscreen in an accident and crushed to death.
- 13** 62 year old William Kemp was hit by a crane and killed while working for Freight Masters Services Ltd, Ferry Lane, Rainham.
- 100 dossers are to be 'evicted' from Embankment Tube station arches.
- 15** There is to be an enquiry into the death of 17 year old David Brookes who fell down a disused mineshaft while doing a YTS course.
- 17** Shadow Wignal, accused of throwing 2 gallons of petrol over desks and floor of Brixton Employment Centre and setting them alight refuses to recognise the court during his three-day trial, remaining in the police cells below. He is sentenced to four years.

80 Animal Action demonstrators arrested.

\*Derailment of underground train at Gedling Colliery injures 31 Nottingham miners.

**18** Official YOP toll is 17 deaths and 3000 injuries during its first three years.



- 19** A worker is killed in BP chemical plant explosion in Hull.
- 21** At Brixton prison prisoners rebel against warders' policy of removing ring pulls from drinks cans. 15 screws end up in hospital.
- 22** 13,000 miners strike spontaneously in solidarity with workmate suspended for allegedly hitting out at foreman.
- 24** Home Secretary Leon Brittan announces allocation of 600 extra places for 'disruptive prisoners'. Frankland Prison near Durham is to be allocated to 'top security' prisoners.
- Angry miners jostle union bosses as wildcat strikes spread across Yorkshire coalfields.
- DPP clears police of blame in connection with death of James Davey in a Coventry police station.
- 1,000 jobs are to go at the Dunlop car tyre plant in Birmingham.
- In Cardiff Court another conspiracy farce is acted out. Anarchist comrade Daffyd Ladd is among the accused.
- DHSS employees call for increased protection following wave of firebombings of offices in response to recent stepping up of DHSS snooping on claimants.
- 25** At the last count Her Majesty was playing hostess to 43,415 prisoners in her stinking jails.
- Mass breakout from Maze concentration camp. 21 escape.
- 28** 38 year old farm worker John Bancroft of Harston loses his right arm in a potatoe harvesting machine.
- 22 year old soldier and Hitler fanatic who had tried to form Nazi movement in the Falls Road is sentenced to life after being found guilty of shooting three of 'his men' one aged 20, the others 19. They had spoken in Hebrew while on checkpoint duty in the Lebanon.
- A warder in Perth maximum security is released by a prisoner who had been holding him at knifepoint for 22 hours.

## OCTOBER

- 1** 28,000 people in London hold shotgun licences. There were 12,000 robberies in the city last year, 1,800 with guns.
- Secretary of State for Social Services Norman Fowler announces that almost 5,000 jobs will go as government health cuts are agreed upon.
- 4** Lewes Crown Court offices are broken into and lockers opened. Walls were sprayed with encircled A's and 'Lewes Rebel Army'.
- Young girls in State 'care' are kept drugged and locked in isolation cells it is disclosed.
- A normal working day - until the lorry skids off an M6 sliproad and falls 30 feet on to another. One driver is killed outright. The other is seriously ill in hospital.
- 7** Attack on Lambeth Conservative Club. Paint and bricks are thrown and slogans graffitied (see document).
- 8** Paul Raymond's Whitehall theatre 'Theatre of War' is cleared when two incendiary devices are discovered on the premises.
- Thames Valley police are to recruit another 100 officers.
- Health and Safety officer reports 8 000 serious accidents among farm labourers in a year.
- 11** A 2 ft iron bar is thrust into the underground chain driving the assembly line at the Austin Rover Cowley works halting production for 90 minutes and causing a loss of 50 Maestro cars.
- Trial begins of two Kent brothers accused of sending a number of letter bombs to 'top people' including Mrs Thatcher and Prince Charles.
- Because of increasingly frequent riots in 'top security' prisons a Home Office committee under Mr Anthony Langdon is to study new ways of controlling prisoners. Screws are calling for re-installation of control units for long term prisoners foreseen by Leon Brittan's announcement of 20 years' minimum imprisonment for killings during armed robberies of police and security guards, etc.
- Manpower Services Commission are considering recruiting 'young offenders' and children leaving special homes (eg Dr Barnardos) to fill some of the 20% places in the YOP which school leavers have refused to be conned into.
- Treasury breakdown of price rises over the past twenty years shows that essentials like fuel, rates and water charges are those that have risen most. The poor continue to be those hit hardest.
- 14** Statistics supplied to an Age Concern conference show that in the winter of 1981 3/4 people on average died each day from cold (ie poverty). Official no of deaths from 'hypothermia' for that year are 646.



Mounting tension in Brittan's prisons forces Home Office to announce plans to reduce prison population by 4,300 in an attempt to defuse it.

A 58 year old worker is crushed to death at Ford Dagenham plant as he helped shift a 2½ ton die used to stamp out car body panels.

- 17** The Home Office, backed by magistrates and parliamentary penal affairs group are preparing a report on 'part time' prison—eg Saturday am till Sunday night for working offenders and 9 am till 9 pm weekdays for the unemployed. These 'part time prisoners' would be taken to special camps manned (they intend) by retired screws and schoolteachers.
- A London professor of kidney diseases is refusing to sign death certificates of patients who have died because of lack of treatment due to government cuts (2,500 out of every 4,000 he estimates) and is instead referring such cases to coroner.
- 19** Explosive situation at Gartree 'model' prison. Warders are demanding eight extra of their kind and say that that in the case of riots they'll abandon compound and flee to the perimeter,



# CHRONICLE

'Supergrass' arrested in West Belfast after retracting evidence at a press conference which has caused the imprisonment of 28 people. More than 300 people are being held in N. Ireland on evidence of 20 'supergrasses'. Some are still waiting after 20 months inside for trial.

**21** Due to privatisation many cleaners—among the lowest paid workers in the country—are to have wage cuts from £2.12 to £1.80 in the London area and ICC in Merseyside are going to reduce their hourly rate from £1.70 to £1.50.

**26** Fire sweeps through an East End sweat shop—DK Netawere Manufacturing of Mile End Road—killing four young seamstresses.

**27** Another victim of work. This time a man is killed while working in a sewer.

**28** Mother of David Moore (he was killed by a speeding police car during Toxteth riots) gets damages awarded.

**29** 187 women, many carrying wire cutters, are arrested when they breach the fence at Greenham Common missile base.

**30** One worker is killed and another two are seriously injured in a Dundee shipyard.

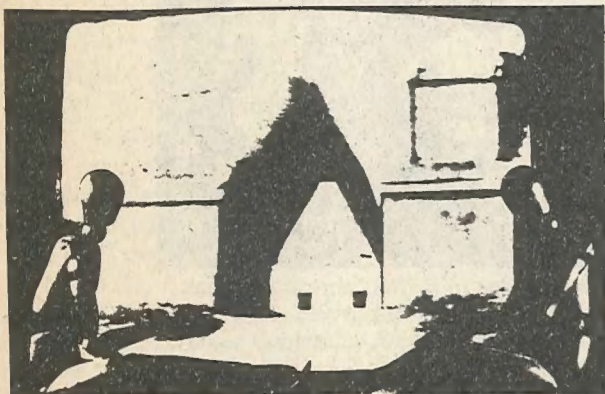
Another 16 women arrested at Greenham.

## NOVEMBER

**1** On Thursday terrified children were evicted by the SPG from a council home, the Hollies, in Sidcup, Kent. The kids had barricaded themselves in after being told they were to be moved to other homes. Twenty were taken to Bexleyheath police station, another thirteen ran away. Since then the home has been smashed up and the warden's house burned out.

Closure of Scott Lithgow shipyard in Clydebank announced. 4,500 jobs will go resulting in the paralysis of the whole area.

Six miners are trapped and their rescuers also risk death more than three hundred feet underground after a roof collapses in a 72 year old pit in Doncaster due to be closed in 1985.



BNFL nuclear waste dischargers have discharged a quarter of a ton of plutonium in the last 20 years, enough to give 250 million people a lethal dose if dispersed through the atmosphere. British Nuclear Fuels have identified a town in Cumbria about 30 miles from the coastline where a 'cancer cluster' exists, but refuse to disclose the name of the town.

**2** War secretary Michael Heseltine announces in the House of Commons that peace protesters will be shot by the guards of the Cruise missiles if it is considered that they are a threat to their genocidal projects.

**5** A deserter is handed back to the army after 23 years. Fusilier Eamonn Gilligan, 46, was remanded at Prestatyn, N Wales to await military escort. He deserted while on leave from Africa.

A man rammed his car through the security cordon into the Greenham Common missile base yesterday. The speeding car headed straight for the giant American Galaxy aircraft unloading

equipment for the missiles but was rammed by US military police before it reached its target.

Fireworks cause £200 damage when thrown into a sex shop in Hounslow, W London.

Six year old Ann Marie from Grayshott, Hants dies after being denied a bone marrow operation due to 'Health Service' cuts.

This year so far 16,595 people have been stopped and searched in Wandsworth alone. 1,372 were arrested.

**6** Garage worker Christopher Wood and another man are killed when there is a gas explosion at a breakdown garage in Bradford.

Police hit out at demonstrators in an Animal Rights demonstration in Carshalton, Surrey using truncheons covered in thick black oil. Blows left stains on victims' hair, skin and clothing and they were later picked out and arrested. 28 arrests made.

Five men in their 30's, two British and three Norwegians, are killed on a north sea oil rig when the seal on a diving bell breaks causing them to get the bends. Over 30 divers have been killed since work began in the North Sea.

**7** A tiny family sweat-shop in the basement of a house in Gravesend, Kent, explodes killing three children and three adults.

**9** Three prisoners rebel at Parkhurst top security jail. Three screws end up in hospital.

Rationalisation of British Leyland means closure of nine Land Rover plants over the next two years. 1,500 jobs will go.

In Whitehaven, Cumbria, an inquest jury return a verdict of accidental death on a Windscale worker who died from cancer. The coroner had told the jury to ignore Yorkshire television's documentary on the plant.

**14** Philip Read and Simon Starkie of Spark Bridge, Cumbria, appear before Bow Street magistrates court charged with obstructing the police. They had carried a dustbin full of estuary mud from around Windscale to number 10 Downing Street. The bin contained fish and a crab, some local sheep and ox livers and some Cumbrian sausages. A geiger counter signalled that they contained radioactivity.

**16** Over 300 people arrested at Westminster as peace demonstration blocks House of Commons. War secretary Heseltine is hit by a paint bomb and sprayed with red paint when he arrives to speak at Manchester University Tory students' meeting.

Warwick students union fined £30,000 for organising demo during visit by education secretary Sir Keith Joseph last year.

A prisoner escapes from a Kent hospital after breaking away from 2 screws.

A transporter carrying an empty nuclear waste flask collides with another lorry on the M6 near Carlisle. The transporter had just completed delivery of 150 irradiated uranium rods to the Windscale reprocessing plant from Chapel Cross power station in Dumfriesshire. BNFL have been using the M6 and A66 routes three times a week since 1980.

**18** NGA fined £50,000 for contempt of court in defying injunction on unlawful picketing.

There is to be an increase of £92 million in the prison spending budget to accelerate the building of ten new prisons. Wayland, near Norfolk, and Stocken Hall in Leicestershire are planning to open this year. Apple Thorn juvenile prison mean to open in Cheshire in 1986 and four others—Bovingdon, Hertfordshire; Gayneshall, Cambridgeshire; Swaleside, Kent; Garth, nr Preston, Lancashire are planned for 1987. A new category C prison is being built at Featherstone, Staffordshire where there is already a closed prison and the tenth prison and

by far the biggest is to be a new local prison for London, at Woolwich, expected to be completed by 1991 and have a capacity of 770.

A prison screw is held hostage for three hours in a workshop in Hull maximum security jail.

A nine month old baby being breast fed has spent over a week in a damp mediaeval police cell in Liverpool with his mother on cheques charges.

**19** The Metropolitan Police rush out 19 pages of 'radical reforms' in response to a 1,000 page study of their brutality and racism by Police Studies Institute.

**21** Process workers at Windscale (sorry, Sellafield), take and publicise the internal log report which demonstrates that BNFL had been covering up by giving false figures of radioactive waste washed up on beaches at weekend.

**23** Seven men are cleared of terrorist charges in Northern Ireland after the informer—a British ex-soldier on whose evidence alone they were arrested and imprisoned, is denounced as 'a forger, a perjurer and a thief'.

A vigilante group of university officials and students is to be set up at Manchester University after the paint spraying of Heseltine last week.

30 prisoners were evacuated from the Wyckham wing in Winchester prison after a fire started in a mattress in an occupied cell. Six screws are in hospital recovering from after effects of smoke.

600 pickets in Warrington in the greatest challenge to Government's two Labour laws of 1980 and 1982.

**29** 22 printers, 26 students and 13 unemployed appear in two special magistrates' courts at Warrington. 50 are charged with breach of the peace, 22 with wilful obstruction.

Determined to get his pound of flesh, Leon Brittan is to open a new enquiry into the Albany riots after failing in his first attempt when the High Court ruled that procedure against mutiny charges went against 'natural justice'.

## DECEMBER

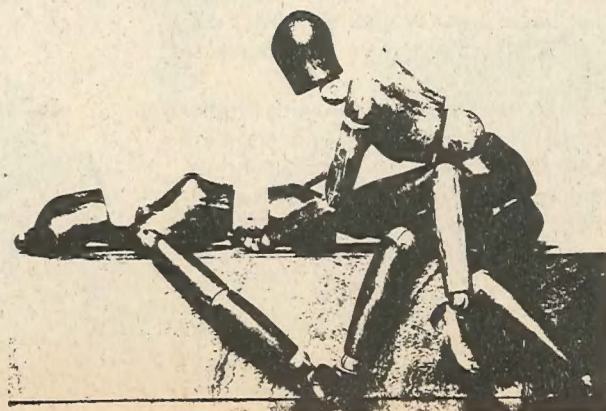
**1** Hundreds of NGA pickets defy court injunction. Police close exit slip roads from M62 leading to Winwick estate.

RUC admit to killing an 80 year old woman during a gun battle in Co. Tyrone.

**2** Scotland Yard and Government step in to forbid payment of ransom by Associated British Foods for release of kidnapped executive Mr Don Today.

House of Commons approve clause in Police and Criminal Evidence Bill extending to police powers to stop and search 'all whom they reasonably suspect of carrying offensive weapons or housebreaking equipment'.

Eight firemen are injured in a fire at ICI petro-chemical works in Cleveland.





# CHRONICLE

5

SAS open fire on three men killing two and injuring one in secret operation in Northern Ireland.

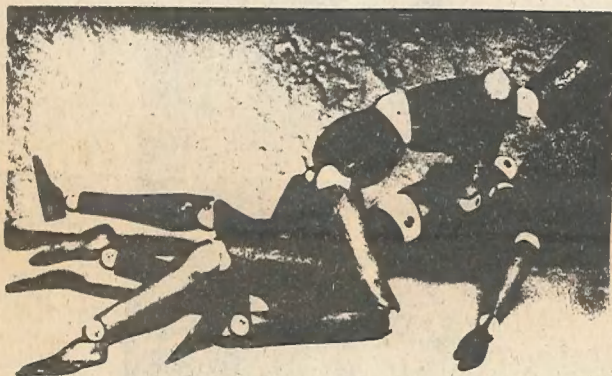
The link between power stations and nuclear arms is again confirmed when at CND conference in Sheffield A. Wedgewood Benn discloses that plutonium from Windscale was sold to the Americans to make nuclear arms.

Foreseeing the impossibility of preventing further escapes from the Maze concentration camp new security measures have been introduced, i.e. more warders, wider deployment of 'quick reaction force', frequent searches and bullet proof screens in control rooms of each of the H blocks.

The number of juveniles in jail has proportionately tripled since the Criminal Justice Act earlier this year put more power into the hands of magistrates against young offenders.

6

20,000 plastic bullets have been supplied to 15 police forces in England and Wales: Metropolitan, Avon and Somerset, Essex, Humberside, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Merseyside, Norfolk, N. Wales, N. Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Sussex, Warwickshire and Wiltshire in case of riots.



7

After spending seven years in jail accused of murder, Mervyn Russell, 39, is freed. Evidence available at the time of his trial was finally checked, proving his innocence.

Wealthy farmer Thomas Dale ploughs his Bentley into a Citroen 2 CV rather than swerve off the road when his brakes fail. A young family of five are wiped out.

9

James Smith, a 46 year old Yorkshire miner was killed yesterday, crushed by machinery at the new Riccal mine in the Selly coalfield.

A 57 year old carpenter was awarded £155,000 for permanent brain damage sustained when he fell from a faulty joist at M Conway (Formwork Ltd).

900 angry workers at Sellafield Nuclear Fuels pass vote of no confidence in management because of contamination incidents due to a manager not reading log book and releasing radioactive slick into the Irish Sea.

19

11 London neighbourhood advice and legal aid centres are to be closed due to government cuts.

Quote: "When we stopped eleven bricks were thrown from the top floor and six smashed into his white Princess car" (agent for Brent Tory MP re Chalkhill Estate, Brent).

Following their American counterparts (a source of many refined techniques in 'low level' 'community' policing since the riots) police will now record interrogations. People are expected to believe that this great technological innovation will eliminate the possibility of pre-confessional threats, beatings and other forms of routine torture.

London teachers demand enquiry on exploitation of children. With increasing redundancy among adults, children are becoming the breadwinners in many families with early morning, evening and weekend jobs.

BR absenteeism and self-managed time-keeping

are sabotaging the City by holding up commuters on the London-Tilbury-Southend line.

Ten workers are rescued after an explosion caused by ignition of the highly inflammable titanium tetrachloride in the Laporte chemical factory at Stallingborough, Humberside.

## JANUARY

4

Compensation is paid to six cancer victims at Sellafield plant but BNFL do not admit responsibility.

5

Two magistrates courts are set aside in Newbury for 140 trials on charges of obstruction. Arrest warrants were issued for 17.

6

1,200 jobs are to go at Basildon, Essex.

ID cards—manufactured by Data Card UK, Chichester—for everyone in Britain. From tomorrow they will be issued to all school leavers, all new immigrants and to anyone whose name is changed by marriage. Two and a half million are to be issued this year, similar numbers in subsequent ones.

11

Sarah Tisdall remanded on bail at Bow Street magistrates court re "secret" memorandum from Heseltine to Thatcher naming the day of arrival of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common which she gave to the Guardian for publishing.

Blitz operation in Greater Manchester. 40 homes are raided by armed police and more than 25 people arrested during investigation of armed robberies in the area.

3,500 jobs are to go from British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL) workshops. The company wants to cut 1,217 jobs at Swindon, Wiltshire alone. Shildon works in Durham are also to be closed with a loss of 950 jobs.

At his first anniversary speech, Michael Heseltine underlines the need to continue to give the peace movement wide media coverage 'to prevent pushing protest groups to more extreme actions'.

A former research chemist, Ronald Knight, aged 61, was jailed at Gloucester magistrates court for leaving a biscuit tin in the city's main post office and telling someone 'there's a bomb in that'.

Michael Hickey, serving a life sentence in Gartree, spent his 48th day on the roof of the maximum security prison.

A riot earlier this week caused damage of about £40,000 at Peterhead top security jail.

13

600 people in South Shields and another 240 at Lambertshead, Wigan, are to lose their jobs in a 'rationalisation programme' by Plessey.

Five boys aged 13 to 15 are accused of trying to kill a policeman by knocking him off his motorcycle. Charged with attempted murder, they were released from custody at Hamilton Sheriff Court pending further enquiries.



14

The post of Chief Constable, at £30,000 a year, is to be re-advertised. It seems none of this State run gang of spies and thugs wants to stand up as ringleader, preferring the old alibi that they're all 'just obeying orders'.

17

A man aged 38 charged with attempted theft died mysteriously in a police cell in Camberwell magistrates court where he was being held overnight.

18

Scott Lithgow closure is now considered inevitable, meaning 4000 jobs will be lost in Clydeside.

19

British Aerospace and Ferranti announce 1,180 redundancies at plants in NW England.

Unemployed manual workers, who have to live on 40 per cent of what the employed are paid, are 19 times more likely to attempt suicide than any other social group according to research reported in New Society.

Leyland Trucks announce they are going to cut 1,000 jobs at its Albion plant in Glasgow, Leyland, Lancashire and Watford.

## FEBRUARY

1

Three engineers working on a generator at Twyford sub-station in Berkshire are injured by an explosion in the station.

'Rate-capping' being introduced by government will cause cuts of up to 40 per cent in the London area forcing authorities to end home help services and close old peoples homes.

3

Unemployment rose by 120,000 to 3,199,678 in January.

Andrew Birch, a bread delivery roundsman, took two days off work to make a stand against Cruise missiles. He drove to Greenham Common Air Base where, headlights blazing, and horn blaring, he rammed a gate knocking a policeman 15 feet into the air.

Investigation teams set up by Norman Tebbit last year to investigate DHSS fraud are to be trained in police colleges. Lancashire Constabulary's police training school near Preston is one of them.

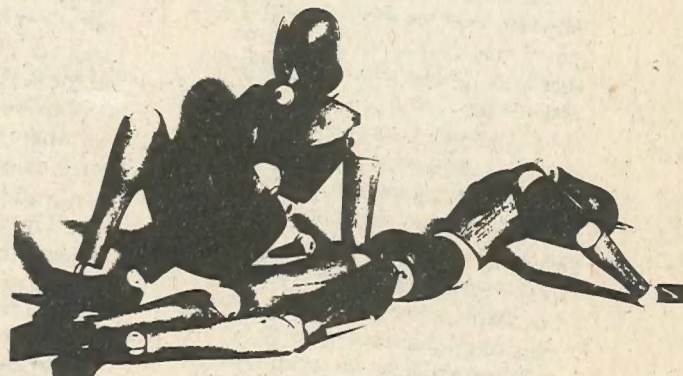
4

British American Tobacco announce plans to cut jobs by 1,840 at their plants in Liverpool, Southampton and Woking, Surrey.

Andrew Clemo, aged 19, threw himself under a train minutes after being sacked from his first job at the T.I. Parkray company in Belper, Derbyshire.

7

73,600 families were homeless in Britain in 1982, over a quarter of them in London. On April 1, 1983, 167,000 council houses were standing empty.



The CHRONICLE will report the most significant actions in the struggle against the State, capital and oppression in all its forms. It cannot obviously be complete. Comrades with knowledge of relevant events should send a brief summary of them. The present tendency towards organised consensus and total control cannot be clearly understood through one single act of repression, but the sum of them, which we are also putting in the Chronicle, can be a useful instrument. In the same way, a full picture of a class struggle which often seems confused and barely perceptible, is undoubtedly a useful instrument of orientation towards action.



# VANDALISING FOR FUN NOT PROFIT

On the night of the fifth of November the Lambeth Conservative Club was raided. Windows were bricked, paint bombs thrown, red paint poured down the doorsteps and 'Tories Against the Bomb' stenciled on its walls. Oh yes, and the cars in the club's car park were spiked.

The whole thing took thirty seconds and a minimum of organisation 'Who's going to throw the bricks then? Oh, I might as well'. It was done by a group of friends getting together to make a friendly gesture to the supporters of a political party which has contributed so much for Lambeth—more poverty, more jail sentences, more police (some of them in kinky new uniforms), more sadness, and more depression (and I don't just mean the economic kind).

Some right-minded citizens might ask: "Just what did that achieve?" THIS: A wonderful night out. It showed those people inside that being voted into power by 32% of the country in a decrepit and disgusting election does not protect them from the anger of those they imagine they were lordling it over. And above all it showed that there are people around who are *prepared to disobey*. That was the best thing about it. Actions like that give vent to feelings which cannot 'legally' be expressed. Feelings which are too deep, and far too human to be expressed through the machine of what the people who profit by it choose to call democracy. ('Democracy' means rule by the people: whatever happened to that one, eh?). What we did, those at the receiving end might like to know, was done with care not to hurt *people*. If only *they* would be as careful when they wield the power bestowed on them by the anonymous electorate!

What we did was another form of political graffitiing, a bit of self-expression if you like, in a country where the members of the Conservative Club will only hear the views of the influential, the journalists, the politicians and so forth (never those of the folk who live round the corner). Why? Because we don't write for glossy magazines, and we have no access to TV or radio and probably never will.

The hinge of our 'democracy' is legality—obedience to the law. The government agrees to a set of laws which are softer than the laws they would ideally want to push through all their plane, and in exchange for this softness 'we', the voters, must obey those soft laws to the letter. That's the theory. So when something illegal is done—like a paint-bombing—every citizen who still respects the law sees one side of a reasonable contract being broken and the whole set-up collapsing like a row of dominoes. The moment, however, that anyone

tries to live a freer and better life, it becomes clear that the contract is *not* reasonable at all and that for any kind of human freedom to even begin both the law and obedience to it must go, as they are merely the devices (and clever devices at that) by which one group of people hold down another. This isn't to say we should go out and do something illegal for the hell of it and then claim we're freer; but when we do something, anything, we should push the legal question out of our heads and make a personal decision, a truly responsible decision. Legality is irrelevant to human beings, and is only clung to as a guide by those who are too weak or too intimidated or, perhaps, too unsure of themselves, to think and act for themselves.

In West Germany, where demonstrations are dealt with so fiercely that they are hardly ever held, people who prefer to think and act for themselves have resorted to numerous small actions. No-one believes for a minute that because these actions are small and disconnected, they are therefore 'not popular'. It should be the same here. Large demonstrations are treated leniently—but at the same time they are ignored with contempt by the authorities they want to influence. So let's do something else. Short of exterminating us nobody is going to get rid of our anger, and by 'our' I mean everybody who is constricted unreasonably in any way by authority in the course of their day. Anyone not included?

Wherever you live, something can be done! (and done again). If you can't afford the paint and awls, then try a mass occupation, a street blocking, an unofficial picket, or if there's only one of you then talk to someone else about how you feel, at least. And remember that what counts is what you do, not what you natter about—so you'd be better off with a group of people you know and trust at heart than with a group of people who have come together for artificial motives—like all belonging to the same party. And don't forget that what you are doing is nothing compared to the blindness, the arrogance, the stupidity and lack of human sense to be found in the set-ups you're attacking.

Obviously you know better than I do where your oppressors go about their daily business. However here are a few addresses of some of the worst and I mean the worst—50 Warwick Square, London SW1 (Victoria Tube): here you can find Roberto Fiore an Italian fascist wanted in Italy for his involvement in various (lethal) bombings; here too is Michael Walker, NF member and editor of *The Scorpion* a far right glossy which is now selling at WH Smith outlets, and which uses Warwick Square as its contact address. Other tenants include Robin Davies

(assistant to David—the six million never died—Irvine) and a Conservative junior minister called Nicholas Ridley.

15 Bradley Road, Chiswick, London—here lives Edward Thompson, a director of Schermuly Ltd (from Newdigate, Dorking—another address). This company specialises in the manufacture of clandestine surveillance equipment and anti-riot gear; their brochure says that they 'lead the field in all aspects of internal security and counter-insurgency operations'. Among their products you will find pocket-sized electric prod batons (clearly for the plain clothes) and several designs for concealed cameras. They're helping thugs everywhere (they've supplied 65 foreign police/military authorities). Does anyone know? Does anyone care?

South Africa House. A fairly obvious building located in Trafalgar Square, London (nearest Tube Charing Cross).

113 Grove Park, Camberwell. An unimposing building housing a joint surveillance and bugging facility used mainly by the C7 department of the Met (Camberwell SE5, by the way) Political bugging is widespread. 300 million pounds go every year to intelligence and counter-insurgency research.

93 Ebury Bridge Road London SW1. Better known as 'Tinkerbell' this centre is devoted entirely to listening in to the phone conversations of honest citizens. For more information see Duncan Campbell's *Phone tapping and the Security State* £1.50 from most anarchist, socialist and independant bookshops (like Foyles).

I'm not suggesting that addresses like the above or any other you feel represents a threat to your freedom can best be dealt with by a quick paint job. There are as many ways of protesting as there are ideas in your head. As long as you know what you are doing, why you are doing it, what you hope to achieve out of it, and realise that what you do is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** and that you must account for it.

It helps if you can rope in as many trusted people as possible, and that one thing leads to another.

A time has come at last when people can react against the constant imprisonment of their thoughts and actions without being accused of working for a foreign power. We are working for ourselves and may they do the same everywhere in the world, east and west, north and south. Freedom begins at home. We cannot fight the powers that be directly (their weapons, in the last sixty years, have become far too powerful for that) But acting together we can undermine them until they collapse. One human being is worth more than all the destructive

machinery in the world than all the constraints and customs we take for granted, than all the hierarchical institutions which are now rusting slowly, encircled by State frontiers which have neither rhyme nor reason, than all the orders and 'yessirs' which can be heard everywhere, whether the place be 'revolutionary', 'Popular', 'Democratic' or just plain wretched. And as we go about this 'destruction' we can build as we have destroyed, with those we trust, working together on vital projects. listening to suggestions and acting upon them as we see fit, instead of mindlessly obeying commands from our equals. I'll put it another way—if we don't act, we're finished, for good. So good luck.

George Orwell





# STOP THE CITY?

## FROM INFORMATION TO ATTACK

*Stop the City* was an informative action. Such actions are interesting and useful, though limited, and cannot just be written off as worthless because some comrades don't agree with the methods they use. The problem is deeper than that and is worth going into.

An informative demonstration can conceal itself under some pretty impressive slogans—often to mobilise more people, especially the young marginal fringes—but it remains a demonstration with the aim of making certain facts known. It might call itself *Stop the City* or *Burn the City*, but the aim is to draw people's attention to certain things, nothing else. As such it remains a useful but limited action.

To participate in this kind of demonstration in order to push it, from within, towards more violent, revolutionary objectives is a mistake. It becomes the mythical vanguardist *entrism* of which Lenin and in particular Trotsky were masters. We well know today that anarchists have no interest in entrism. If one doesn't agree with an informative type of demonstration, it is better to stay at home.

It is quite logical for comrades in that kind of demonstration to remain sitting in the road while police charge, not moving to prevent themselves being arrested or offering any other kind of

resistance.\* It is one of the main methods participants in that kind of demonstration can use, unless an unlikely spontaneous popular participation occurs, transforming it into an insurrectional situation of street fighting.

Those who don't agree with such methods as sitting and waiting to be charged by police should not participate in such a demonstration, but organise with other like-minded comrades to prepare one of a different kind.

But what should these different demonstrations be like?

We find ourselves faced with a basic problem of method. The demonstrations should be in a logic of *attack*, the informative part where people are told of the reasons for the demonstration, the State's projects, the aims of militarism, etc, are planned beforehand. Next a precise programme of drawing people into a structure for attacking, organised in advance, carefully prepared with the means adequate to the kind of attack that is desired.

Comrades therefore not only take on the task of *informing* but also that of *getting people involved*, something which cannot be done using the same means as the former. For example, if a leaflet or poster is enough to transmit the main point of the information, they are not adequate for providing people

with operational proposals. It is far more important that these be given with sudden graffiti, banners and placards shown at a particular moment, or with a brief speech or mobile talks with loud-hailers. Involving people is an emotive and immediate fact linked to the content of the information and analyses, but has its own requirements in order to come about.

Involvement might not happen immediately, making a third stage in the action necessary: an exemplary minority attack on a precise objective which has been studied beforehand with care taken to ensure that this objective is not super-protected by the police. In this perspective an attack against the police itself is significant and can be a moment of going towards wider involvement.

But this phase must not become an end in itself, nor detached from the way the demonstration as a whole is going. In other words, it should not be programmed in such a way that it *must* take place at any cost because anyway everything is ready for the action in question. Nor must it be a way to show off how brave, extremist, violent and courageous we are. All that is unimportant.

The direct attack is a step forward in the project of general involvement. It should not be forgotten that the demonstration is aimed at the transformation of a minority attack into a *generalised*

*attack*, i.e. an attack that has succeeded in involving other people.

If it is observed that participation is limited and separate, if it is seen that people are bewildered by the informative content, the whole thing can be blocked even before the minority attack. Basically anarchists have no interest in bringing about mini-revolts which are nothing but a storm in a teacup.

The aim of every clash is its generalisation. This is certainly never foreseeable in absolute, and for this reason attacks by the minority often end up being defeated. But it is always possible to study the conditions for their realisation. When these conditions are absolutely negative, then it is better to desist.

To sum up this brief piece: it isn't possible to make an abstract criticism of a demonstration like *Stop the City*. Whoever doesn't agree with it should set to work to organise another kind of demonstration where the problem of sitting down in front of the police doesn't arise. This second kind of demonstration is structured in four phases: a) information; b) popular involvement; c) minority attack; d) generalised attack. The last two stages do not necessarily follow on from the first, and might not happen, but it's indispensable that comrades prepare everything as if the latter are absolutely certain.

A.M.B.

## A QUESTION OF DIETETICS, OR GLUTEN-FREE CHRIST

In a tiny factory tucked away in Galway, Ireland, a band of nuns have been pursuing an activity which in less progressive times would have led them to the stake. Their heresy has consisted in producing Communion wafers with gluten free flour for ingestion by those suffering from coeliac disease which there is a high incidence of in the area and which also claims the Archbishop of Liverpool among its sufferers.

The flesh of Christ without gluten, although clearly more palatable and less toxic to some, cannot be tolerated by the Vatican without careful consideration. For centuries the anthropophagous rite has been central to catholic dominion with the presence of Jesus in bread and wine under discussion from the second to the eighth century. The Council of Jerusalem (754) was against a real (flesh and blood) presence, but the Council of Nice accepted it. The question was definitively resolved by another council held in Rome in 1215.

The Eucharist is the transformation of bread into meat and wine into blood. No need for alchemy, special recipes or devices. The mere pronunciation of the phrases 'this is my body' 'this is my blood' by a priest, a gulp and down he goes in one: body, blood, spirit and divine essence, that handsome young carpenter from Nazareth, causing many a

chaste heart to flutter and centuries of orgasmic fantasies in cloistered nunneries.

Anyone who dares deny that he is actually ingesting Christ's body faces certain ex-communication as set down by the Council of Trento. Vegetarians abstain from this veritable orgy of cannibalism—not just a steak but a whole carcass—and only the priests may savour the vampiric delight of drinking the blood on its own. For the masses it is contained in the bread.

The probability of one, one thousand, or even millions of resurrections from urban sewage pipes or tipler toilets has never been clearly stated. St Thomas of Aquinas dedicated many pages to showing that at some point in the digestive tract a metamorphosis occurs: the divine body becomes mere faeces. But subsequent doctrinaries have found difficulty in coming to terms with this and it remains an open question.

These delicate problems of fusing the divine with the digestive tract however have not distracted the Holy See from its more wordly pursuits. Through a massive operation of rationalised physical and psychological terror throughout the centuries they have accumulated terrestrial wealth and power unmatched in the world today. From the sumptuous Vatican Palace with its 8,000 rooms and the most priceless art treasures the world knows, there spreads a web of property, banking,

speculation which it would take pages to list. Suffice it to say that it plays a determining role in the economic running of Italy, Spain, South America and even the United States, countries whose dispossessed are in large part enslaved to this spiritual and material empire.

So, beware, ye witches of Galway. With these tasteless wafers you are feeding a monster that oppresses millions. Fewer and fewer of them are prepared to wait for the pie in the sky, gluten free or not.

J.W.

### AT GREENHAM AS IN COMISO

Predictions of the social and economic effects of the Cruise missile base in Comiso are proving themselves with clockwork regularity here in England at Greenham Common and surrounding area. In January, seven US soldiers were sacked for drug addiction and there have been further reports of heroin addiction inside the missile base. Newbury shopkeepers are not at all pleased to hear that the Americans are building their own supermarket, so the dollars won't be rolling into their pockets after all. And last week's secret night convoy was a taste of the militarisation that will steadily increase and spread over our territory.

## HEALTH SERVICE WAR PLAN

### HOME DEFENCE SUB-REGION 6.

A large number of unburied dead would present a health hazard of significant proportions. However, due to shortage of fuel, it may not be possible to perform mass cremations. The more practicable means of disposal would be through mass burials in pits. The burial of 1000 bodies would require a pit 50 metres long, four metres wide and 2.5 metres deep. Again due to shortage of fuel such pits would have to be dug by hand. Able-bodied volunteers should, therefore, ensure that they possess a spade or a shovel. Advance planning is necessary to choose suitable sites to ensure mass burials do not pollute water supplies.

Part of a duplicated letter on official-looking paper headed with the address of Mr John Barnes, emergency planning officer for the South East Thames regional health authority. It was distributed to homes all over that area, causing hundreds of distraught people to contact his office at David Solomons House, Southborough, and to jam Kent and Sussex police switchboards.



# COMISO

Comiso in Sicily is Italy's Greenham Common. A hitherto unknown little town, it now has a prime place on NATO's nuclear armaments map, having been chosen to house 112 Cruise missiles. Its similarity with Greenham ends here however, the social and economic reality of the town and surrounding area being quite different to that of Newbury. Although Comiso itself is a moderately prosperous commercial and agricultural centre, it is surrounded by poverty and unemployment, a situation that prevails among Sicilian peasants and manual workers. In contrast to what was being said by the Italian government—that the missile base would bring wellbeing and jobs to the area—the local anarchists (groups in Ragusa and Catania) set to work to give a more realistic picture. Increased economic hardship through rising prices, arrival of the mafia to the area, circulation of hard drugs, prostitution, are among the effects that this military occupation will have on the area's people. The anarchists also criticised the typical pacifist approach to the struggle which tended to see nuclear arms as a problem in themselves and made reference to complicated analyses of international politics. They challenged the approach of the political parties who professed to be against the base, in particular the Communist Party with their massive rallies and demonstrations which did absolutely nothing to threaten the deadly programme being put into effect by the American and Italian governments with the help of the mafia who hold all the contracts for building the base. They set about the massive task of preparing a popular mass insurrection which was to take the form of a mass occupation of the base. For almost two years they worked incessantly, going around the area doing outdoor meetings, leafletting, opening a tiny office in Comiso itself and helping to form self-managed leagues as the organisational form the struggle was to take. The difficulties were many—lack of funds (while thousands were pouring into the Peace Camp), police repression, threats from the mafia. There was also incomprehension by comrades who had little experience of the reality of social struggle so different to activity in and around specific anarchist groups. As time went on it became clear that the local population were waiting for words to become actions. Most of them had pronounced themselves to be firmly against the base, many agreed with occupation as the only effective way to prevent its being built on their doorsteps, and some had even gone beyond that and made specific commitments for the days of the occupation itself. But they wanted proof too that the anarchists were serious in their intentions. A date for the occupation was fixed—22,23,24 July—and publicised worldwide. The channels used were mainly international anarchist groups, bookshops and peace organisations. 'Everyone to Comiso' was the slogan in an appeal to the whole movement to come forward and participate in some way in what could have been a moment of great importance in Sicily and in the struggle against militarism and the State generally. What follows is an abbreviated account of what happened instead at Comiso on July 22 and 23 1983.

**H**ere is a brief account of why, in our opinion, our work during the past two years in Comiso ended with a great many bruised and beaten comrades, a passive, frightened population, and a second suggestion from the local mafia "to get out of Comiso". Does this mean that the people of Comiso prefer Americans and nuclear missiles in their land to having anarchists and punks walking around their streets? Or are there other reasons why they did not participate in what could have led to preventing the construction of the base?

**S**ince the events of the 22nd, 23rd and 24th July we have been accused of exaggerating the phenomenon of the Leagues. 'Triumphalism', 'disinformation' (*Peace News*), 'blind optimism', 'false' are some of the terms. Some say we dreamt the whole thing up. Comrades who turned up on the 22nd and did not find 'the masses' lined up outside the airport, decided after a few brief encounters in bars and hitch-hiking, that none of 'the locals' had even heard of the Leagues. This led to their feeling the need to do something, anything, to show that the anarchists were in town.

**W**e have described the Leagues as mass organisations from the start. It was pointed out that they were not trade union or syndical type organisations, but nuclei, points of reference in the optic of a self-managed struggle against the missile base. Their methods were to be those of permanent conflict and direct attack against the base. As can

be seen from their Organisational Document their aim was not to expand quantitatively. For example, in the town of Vittoria the students' League brought all the local schools out in a spontaneous strike. The object was not to get them all to belong to the Leagues but to stimulate them, through their relationship point-of-reference/mass, to discuss and face the problem of the base and how it would affect their lives. The Leagues in other towns acted in the same way.

**A** great deal has been said about our 'lack of clarity' concerning the Communist Party. References to Spain, and to popular fronts of more recent times abounded. But we too know about Spain. We are also aware of the meaning of 'popular front'. We didn't completely lose our heads.

**N**ever at any time did we foster any illusions about this party. We merely tried to put pressure on it at regional level as far as the Comiso missile base was concerned. At one point they found themselves obliged to publicly support us at a trial following arrests made after the students' strike in Vittoria. Again, under pressure from the workers at the oil refinery in Gela, they had us immediately released from the local police station when we were arrested while leafletting. We knew it would take a lot more to force these traitors to an unofficial external support of the occupation. For them this would have meant the possibility of recuperation. For us, a certain guarantee, credibility in a social reality where that party is still a force to be reckoned with. It would have gone to-

wards dispelling the accusations of terrorism that had been made against us, also to reducing the possibility of a military confrontation, preventing our isolation and generally increasing participation in the occupation.

**O**ur main point of reference, those most receptive to the information we were circulating and the most combative, were the base of the CP. We didn't make an attack on the Party or criticise their politics. We talked instead in terms of their 'inefficiency' in the struggle against the missile site. We never had any 'base' to oppose or link with theirs, hence the absurdity of 'popular front' type accusations.

**O**ur aim was to organise a revolt. We wanted to create the essential conditions for an insurrection. An insurrection which would be limited and circumscribed, perhaps, but which was to be based on the rebellion of the people. We therefore had to penetrate the reality of their lives, their mentality, their traditions, the symbols and commonplaces of proletarian values. While others talked, we set to work.

**W**e were aware of the importance of an unofficial recognition of the occupation by the Communist Party. We also knew that would only happen if our strength forced them to. Our first indication that they felt sure of themselves was when they kept quiet after the attack on our house by the local mafia. The subterranean work carried out by the small parties in their service within the popu-

lation and the Peace Camp was beginning to bear fruit. They and the IMAC and CUDIP called for three days of blockades on the 19th, 20th and 21st July, the days immediately preceding the deadline the occupation. That this was a deliberate act of sabotage was confirmed when the organisers didn't even turn up, much to the frustration and rage of the German, Dutch and English comrades at the Peace Camp who were sincerely committed to stopping the Cruise programme. They found themselves alone in the sweltering heat. The workers went in to carry on construction work. At about 11am a few 'progressive' MPs came along to have themselves filmed by the TV cameras in front of the gates.

**S**o, the Communist Party had their alibi for not giving the go ahead for the occupation. No one had come to the blockades (yet when they want to the CP can mobilise tens of thousands), so 'the masses' were not 'mature' for direct action. Another major effect of this operation was disorientation. With so many 'days of struggle' people had become confused. By instrumentalising the Peace Camp the CP had put a stamp on the days that were to follow. Already one part of the project was lost before it had begun.

**A**s far as the pacifists were concerned, many of them were aware of the significance of the three days of so-called struggle organised by the politicians of the Peace Camp. They were tired of ideological/political discussions and among the most enthusiastic and constructive of the affinity groups which had formed to prepare the mass occupation.

**T**he punks' revolutionary impetus put all the other mistakes in the shade. It was they who made concrete proposals when it seemed that all should be abandoned. For many it was their first experience of social struggle, but they left the old 'mature' revolutionaries far behind, blinded by their various ideological positions.

**C**onsidering the nature of the situation, the presence of the Italian anarchist movement was considerable. It was small considering the numerical possibility of the movement. Some had imagined they would find 'the masses' waiting for them outside the airport. Had we been so sure of that we needn't have made such an effort to solicit anarchists' presence at such a crowded appointment. Many however were perfectly aware of the situation, having followed it actively for months beforehand. They came early to prepare the days of struggle along with the comrades of the Leagues. They were the ones who made the best working contribution to the affinity groups.

**T**hen of course there were those who had come to 'observe' and criticise. We are convinced that a great number of comrades failed to understand the situation during these three days. Which explains the procrastination, doubts and arguments. During the preceding two years we had distributed thousands of leaflets, held over a hundred outdoor



meetings, debates and conferences, had time on local television and radio. We approached, and were approached by, truck drivers, tractor owners, people with experience of trade union struggles and some who had had personal clashes with the police. In this way we built up a small network of people available for the struggle against the base. But they needed some evidence of our seriousness, our commitment, numerical strength, etc.

**W**e contacted comrades outside the area—Palermo, Naples, Calabria and elsewhere, and they in turn built up their own networks. We thus built a map of available people and means. Not a political or ideological map but a practical one. We can't go into everything here, but there were a number of trucks, tractors, equipment to build a tower in front of the base, barricades for the roads, other means to defend the occupation and make it last. But first we had to give something of our own. Certainly, if the Communist Party had decided to take an interest it would have been different. Instead, they set out to sabotage us, so that potential was lost.

**T**here was also some bad luck. And some missed appointments. For example a well known local ballad singer said he would do street concerts in the poor areas to get the women out of their homes and discuss the occupation. We knew most of the proletarian women were against the base and that they were potentially a great force in the struggle, but they needed some kind of guarantee to push them to make the first step. There is no way of knowing whether the street meetings would have been the catalyst, but that was another thing that went against us.

**T**hen there was the difficulty that comrades from completely different social and cultural situations had in communicating with the local people. This often led to misunderstandings. **B**ut to get back to the organisational work. About ten days before, when the first comrades began to arrive, the idea of forming affinity groups was discussed. Most people there already were a part of some sort of affinity group and it was agreed by all that this was the most natural and effective way to decide upon actions for the days of struggle that were to come. That way it would be possible to avoid discussing delicate topics at open meetings.

**I**t was agreed it was essential to keep in close contact with the populations of Comiso and Vittoria. This was the indispensable cornerstone for transforming our action into a mass event instead of just another isolated political gesture.

**A** great deal of work was dedicated to this problem. A radio link was tried, but was found to be too easily intercepted. After unsuccessful attempts at a mobile radio system we decided on direct contact. We gained access to the main squares of Comiso and Vittoria for the three days and set up loudhailers, amplifiers and bookstalls with the aim of

constantly informing the local people of what was happening around the base.

**O**ther actions were also discussed. It was essential, we all agreed, to avoid a head on clash with police. Being completely outnumbered, it would be impossible for us to keep the struggle going for three days. So, a number of things had to be done. Get material to as near to the base as possible, cut the fence around the base at various points, and carry out minor diversive actions at various points around the perimeter on the first day. This would also test the police's operational capabilities. Actions were carried out, and the police seldom managed to locate the groups involved. Even the local press pointed out the difficulties the police were having for the first time concerning the base at Comiso.

**T**he group in front of the airport were there to meet the local people who came out of interest or curiosity, and some comrades from the Coordinamento who were known locally were present in Comiso and Vittoria as had been decided at the affinity groups' meeting.

**F**rom dawn on the first day we realised we'd made a serious mistake in not having specifically asked comrades to arrive a few days earlier to discuss the organisational aspect. It would have been useful to have a conference somewhere earlier in the year—as proposed at the Leagues' general assembly and rejected by four comrades.

**P**eople kept arriving until late in the afternoon of the 22nd and were told of the affinity groups, but many didn't understand the situation. Some considered affinity groups 'not anarchist' and that everything should be decided at a general assembly.

**A**t the end of the first day there was a call for such an assembly. Many were confused—where were the masses? If they couldn't turn up we might as well all go home. Many were asking what should be done.

**W**e made it clear that all operative decisions would be made at a restricted meeting of affinity groups' representatives after the general assembly.

Some said that the occupation was no longer possible in their opinion and that we might as well withdraw into minor actions and proposed the absurd alternative of occupying the town hall or the local employment office. Another made this his moment to criticise not only the idea of occupation but the whole of our work until then, suggesting, to the astonishment and hilarity of those present, the formation of an antimilitarist structure at national level!

**C**onfusion grew. Criticisms of the affinity groups' decisions abounded. Some maintained that everyone should be in front of the airport. Others questioned the method of affinity groups itself. The meeting, held in the public park (taken over by the Leagues as a camp site for these three days), ended in the early hours of the morning with the proposal

to carry on discussing later at around 9am. Imagine! For the second day of struggle the only decision was to carry on *talking*. This had an immediate and disastrous effect. Many people who were in contact with us, engaged to 'do' something against the base, declared they no longer intended to go ahead in the face of so much discussion and argument. Some stayed until the second day, and some were even present in the demonstration that was charged by the police, but only as passive observers.

**A**nother example of the effect of this inability to reach a common basis for action was that three affinity groups, a German, and Dutch and a French group—who had organised to sabotage the generator of the base and had already taken the necessary material to nearby points and were going to divide into groups to carry out diversive actions while another would go through the fence and work on the generator—faced with the pitiful spectacle of the general assembly, declared they were no longer prepared to listen to such chatter and left. They'd already spent two weeks at the Peace Camp where they'd been subjected to endless discussions on pacifism.

**W**e're not saying that a decisive attack was ruined, but are pointing out how, from mistakes, incomprehension, lack of confidence and conflicting political tendencies, no good ever comes.

**S**o, in the face of such indecision, the affinity groups' meeting could not take place as there was no common ground to start from, and because even the very idea of occupation had been put in question. Meanwhile the police were preparing.

**F**or the comrades of the Coordinamento, we knew what we had to do. The struggle to bring about the occupation had failed, therefore it was necessary to put an end to the whole intervention. There was no point in carrying out a symbolic action just to show that the anarchists were there. We had failed to do what we had set out to do because of our inability to continue what had been begun with the affinity groups. But the absence of an immediate response from the people of Comiso was also a factor. We did not discuss any of the original operative proposals at the affinity groups' meeting that followed. Strag groups' meeting that followed. Strangely enough, at this meeting, those who had had most to say at the general assembly

**I**t was at this point that the punk comrades decided on a spontaneous demonstration to Comiso and the airport. We were against it for various reasons. Especially because it corresponded to all the things we had maintained shouldn't be done at Comiso—direct confrontation





with the police (this time inevitable as the demonstration was unauthorised), a symbolic gesture with no practical effect, no possibility of involving the local people.

**H**owever, we all participated in the demonstration, going through Comiso to the airport. The rest is chronicle of repression. As soon as the sun went down the police and carabinieri sent up flares and charged the peaceful crowd of demonstrators who had long given up chanting

slogans. Comrades ran to escape through the vineyards. Many were caught and beaten savagely. Some were stopped at road blocks and beaten, their vehicles smashed. Many were wounded. Six ended up in hospital.

**I**n spite of all the mistakes and our individual and collective limitations we claim responsibility for the whole intervention at Comiso including the three final days. The insurrectionalist method applied in the antimilitarist struggle in

Comiso was insufficient. Many elements prevented its correct and extended application. Both the negative and the positive aspects could not be seen clearly but only perceived piecemeal, often in a contradictory and superficial way.

**W**e think this method could be applied in other struggles. That is why we have related this experience, and are asking comrades to reflect upon it and consider its application possible in another situation during other

struggles. Naturally, we claim our involvement in the Comiso struggle beyond questions of method as we have always been against the missile base, armaments, and armies. As convinced antimilitarists and anarchist revolutionaries we are against every kind of war, all war armaments, all forms of State terrorism. But we are not for simple declarations of principle: we are not for social peace, we are for the class war and therefore for us the struggle has just begun.

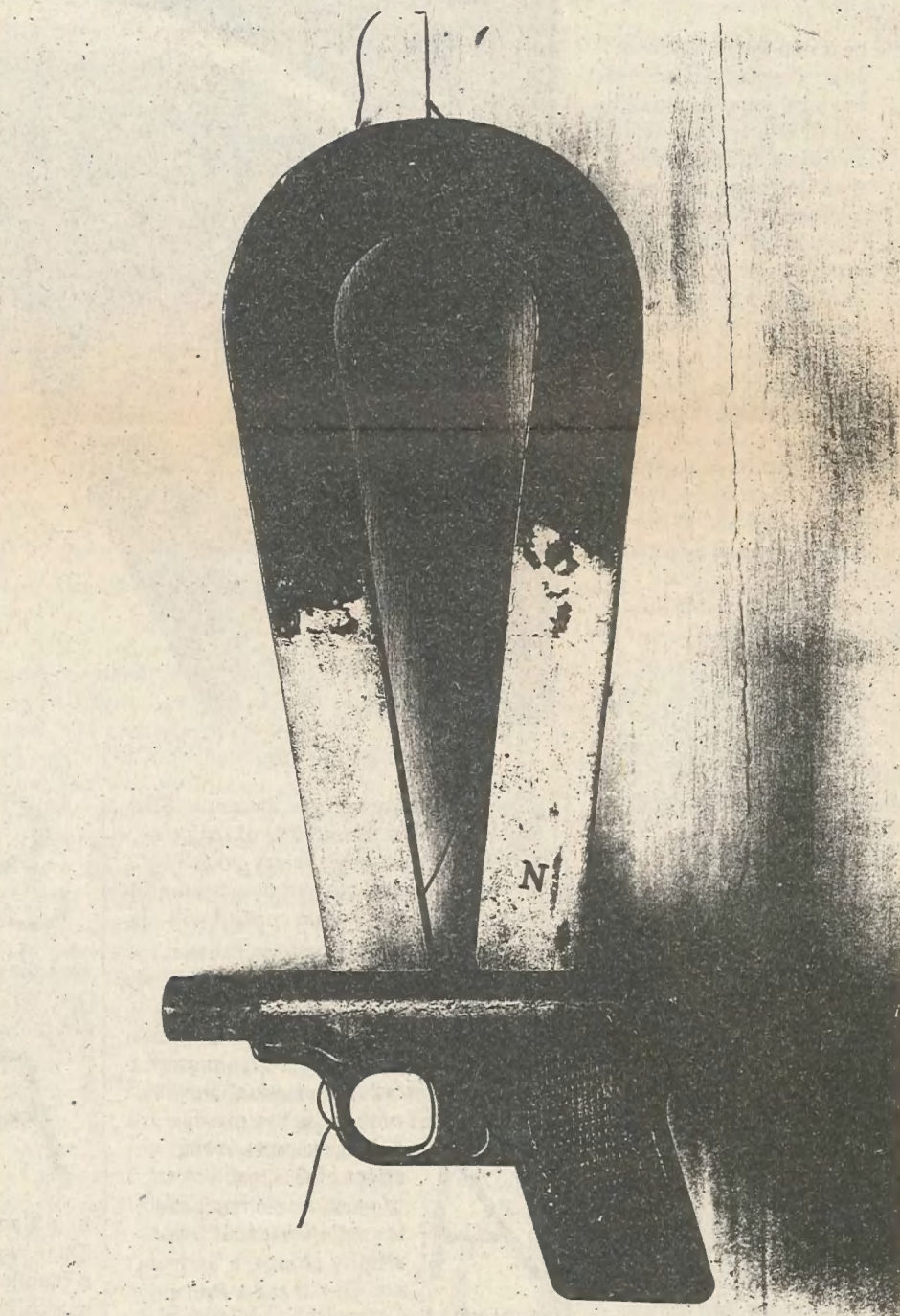
A few comrades

Barcelona, on the north-east Mediterranean coast of Spain, is the capital of Catalonia, a region occupied by the Castilians in 1715, which nonetheless still retains its own language (Catalan, spoken by 7 million people as their first language) and its own customs.

For the last thousand years Barcelona has been the hub of all radical movements in Spain, from anarchism to surrealism, and has consistently been the meeting-place for the disillusioned and oppressed of the peninsula. It has resisted, in turn, the rule of the Pope, the laws of the Inquisition, the encroachments of assorted Spanish kings and queens, military conscription (1905) and fascist takeovers (1936). It has spawned a vast libertarian movement claiming its local identity, and remains the HQ of the largest anarchist trade union (the CNT).

The atmosphere there is heavy with political tension, 24 hours a day. It is the kind of atmosphere in which anything can happen, and where everyone may join in. For example on the first Catalan national day which was allowed to be celebrated (1977, a year after Franco's death) two million people swamped Barcelona, Catalan anarchists, socialists, feminists, communists, nationalists, war veterans, and there were Galicians, Andalusians, Basques there as well because it was an open day of celebration and protest, the largest popular demonstration since the end-of-war festivities in Paris. The police were terrified by the numbers and could do nothing until the crowds thinned out, when they went about their traditional shooting and beating (this time, at least, they had rubber bullets. That one I only saw in photos though that was impressive enough. But it was at first hand that I felt how powerful even a small action could become. It was the winter of 1978, in Barcelona's Picadilly Circus (the Placa de Catalunya, where all the buses congregate), Twelve young anarchists—the oldest was about seventeen—slashed the tyres of the stationary buses, effectively blocking off the whole square. Traffic came to a standstill, crowds gathered. Jumping in and out of the subway entrances the anarchists yelled 'Freedom!' 'Long live Catalonia!' 'Anarquia!' while onlookers added further shouts. It was as if the whole area had suddenly been mobilised—large groups of people came running in flooding the square.

The group I was in went into the subway, chanting and hand-clapping, as the police moved in, about a hundred of them carrying rubber bullet guns firing shots repeatedly into the air, some of them wielding batons (one middle-aged man,



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was suddenly jumped on impulsively by a copper wearing dark glasses and mouth-smoking a cigarette. He was repeatedly beaten around the head and shoulders on who had been calmly watching events,

until he ran away); then there was a cry of 'to the tables!' because the police began to arrest everyone who wasn't in the cafes. About a hundred and fifty people got pulled in. We slipped round the side

and began walking quickly down the Ramblas where small groups of armed police were standing around. In front of them some people were openly passing joints around, and an Indian woman was showing her vagina in a drunken dance to a couple of toothless old men for money. It was a tiny demonstration, but one which almost developed into a full-fledged outbreak of popular feeling. Why? Because there was popular feeling! Almost everyone was on the side of the 'disrupters' and acted accordingly. And it was started by twelve people.

The last demonstration I was on, the marchers got enraged by the sight of a Spanish flag hanging from the front of the *Banc de Barcelona*. Someone with a scarf round his face cut it down, a huge crowd gathered round it and a twelve year old poured petrol on it and set it alight while the others sang. What I am getting at is not that these demonstrations were of any particular importance in themselves, but that they showed the possibilities in a situation where the vast majority were in favour of rather than against the actions. And moments like the above are the rule rather than the exception in Barcelona.

An especially impressive example is the resistance of the CNT when two of its members were sacked from a supermarket belonging to the *Carrefour* chain in Barcelona; they were the only two CNT affiliates in that particular store, and what a coincidence that they were both sacked on more than flimsy excuses (they had had CNT literature on them—the CNT was not recognised by the company). The CNT did what they could to boycott the supermarket in question: stink bombs, leaflets, barricades on the entrances, spiking cars parked outside, and this not only in Barcelona but all over the Spanish State wherever *Carrefour* had branches. Finally the judge in the case declared the sackings illegal and the two were reinstated. *Carrefour* now accepts the CNT as a 'legitimate' union. It was a reminder that a 'union' is not what the government and management accepts to be such but what the members make it.

In Spain under Franco every movement concerned with greater freedom of working people (peasants and unemployed included) was unofficial, with the result that many Spaniards now are not obsessed with legality in the way people are here. Every time we walk like sheep past South Africa House or the Russian Embassy or a bunch of polished wallies setting up phony slogans in Whitehall to taunt anti-nuclear marchers, I think of Barcelona, where action was instant, natural, brave.